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### **THE SARMATIAN MIRROR WITH TAMGAS FROM THE SETTLEMENT OF SEBEŞ - “PODUL PRIPOCULUI” (ALBA COUNTY, ROMANIA): 50 YEARS LATER**

**Abstract:** The article discusses the mirror discovered in 1967 following the archaeological excavations conducted in the Sebeş - “Podul Pripocului” settlement (Alba county/RO), dated to the 3rd – 4th century AD. The piece, singular in the intra-Carpathian area, belongs to the type of disc mirrors with rectangular side handle and decorated reverse. These are specific mainly to the Sarmatae world, yet are also found in the environment of other cultural identities. Although they emerge in the 1st century AD, they were broadly used in the 2nd century – first half of the 3rd century AD, being rare in the second half of the 3rd century AD.

On the Romanian eastern and south-eastern territory, such toiletries appear sometime by mid 2nd century AD, originating especially from graves and features of the second half of the 2nd century – first half of the 3rd century AD, while in only a few cases the dating may also include the first part of the second half of the 3rd century AD. In the case of the specimens from the Romanian territory, these are small, thin in cross-section, exhibiting a slightly marked border on the rim, while the central disc convexity is lacking with most, these being features characteristic to the decorated mirrors of the second half of the 2nd century – first half of the 3rd century AD.

The study of the “Podul Pripocului” exemplar showed that on its reverse there are two identical tamgas set in the mirror, rendered erroneously in their previous publications, which explains the lack of any reported parallels.

The author concludes that most close or very close parallels are specific to the region to the right of the Dnieper. As for the dating, these are specific to the period comprised between the second half of the 1st century AD – mid 3rd century AD. It is also noted that in the north-Pontic area, there are many tamgas with components similar to those on the Sebeş - “Podul Pripocului” mirror (in particular the volutes with the inward wavy loops), however these may not be deemed, according to the author, parallels.

Owing to its significance, yet especially their function and their borrowing mechanism by the neighbouring populaces, the author concludes that the Sebeş - “Podul Pripocului” mirror did not reach the intra-Carpathian area by trade or exchange.

On the basis of the existing finds, it is concluded that currently, it is impossible to say with certainty when the Sebeş - “Podul Pripocului” settlement started or ceased, but also that there was a most certain Barbarian presence, of which further details would be known only subsequent to future archaeological research.

Given the role and function of the tamgas on the objects, their distribution

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manner in other cultural areas and borrowing mechanism by the neighbouring populations, the author concludes it is very likely that among the Barbarians who settled in the “Podul Pripocului” settlement also counted Sarmatians, to whom the presence of this mirror on in the intra-Carpathian area is due.

**Keywords:** *mirrors, tamgas, the Sarmatians, the Carpi, the Free Dacians, Dacia, the north-Pontic area .*

## INTRODUCTION

The mirror discussed herein was yielded in the summer of 1967 by the archaeological excavations conducted in the settlement located by the eastern limit of Sebeş city (Alba county), on the left bank of the Secaş, nearby the “Podul Pripocului”<sup>1</sup>. It was discovered in the inhabitation level ascribed to the 3rd – 4th century AD<sup>2</sup>, where the archaeological investigations of 1960 and 1966 produced artefacts and features specific to the period<sup>3</sup>. Amongst, noteworthy is pit no. 4 where was discovered a bronze brooch with returned foot (Fig. 3/3) together with other fragmentary pottery fragments, as well as a few Roman brick fragments<sup>4</sup>.

The mirror was found fragmentary, lacking the side rectangular handle, provided with a piercing, and a small part of its body. Similarly to other mirrors of the period, it was made of a silver-white alloy. When identified, the surface of the mirror was covered with a greenish-black patina. The item’s obverse is flat, being used as a mirror, while the reverse has the rim marked by a not very high fringe. The reverse surface is decorated towards the exterior with a zigzag line and centrally, with two tamgas in relief set in the mirror. The items’ diameter is of 6 cm, being 0.15 cm thick and weighing 27 grams<sup>5</sup>. The mirror was published by Ioan Al. Aldea four years after discovery<sup>6</sup>, being, in 1982, mentioned and illustrated in K. Horedt’s<sup>7</sup> monograph, *Siebenbürgen in spätrömischer Zeit*. More recently, C. H. Oprescu<sup>8</sup> has made a brief presentation of the item. In all three publications, the tamgas on the mirror’s reverse, as seen in recent photos<sup>9</sup> (Fig. 1-2), were rendered erroneously<sup>10</sup> (Fig. 3/1-2), which explains the lack of reported parallels. The mirror’s examination 50 years after its publication allowed us to note that its reverse exhibits two identical tamgas set in the mirror. These are in the shape of volutes from whose middle start perpendicularly two spindles with outward loop (Fig. 1-2).

<sup>1</sup> ALDEA 1971, 693. The mirror was discovered in area V, trenches 5-6, at 0.30 cm deep from the topsoil. Amicable information Radu Totoianu.

<sup>2</sup> ALDEA 1971, 693.

<sup>3</sup> HORED T *et alii* 1967, 25.

<sup>4</sup> HORED T *et alii* 1967, 23-25, Fig. 10/10-15.

<sup>5</sup> In the publication discussing the mirror, its diameter is mentioned as of 5.9 cm (ALDEA 1971, 693). The mirror’s inventory number is A. 6321, being kept with the “Ioan Raica” Municipal Museum of Sebeş. Measurements, a series of information as well as images illustrating the mirror were supplied by Radu Totoianu, whom we thank this was for expedience and support.

<sup>6</sup> ALDEA 1971, 693-700.

<sup>7</sup> HORED T 1982, Fig. 14/8.

<sup>8</sup> OPREANU 1998, 104, Fig. 23/1.

<sup>9</sup> The H-RTI (Highlight-reflectance transformation imaging), normal rendering (Default), with mathematic filter (specular enhancement) and normal vectors visualization was carried out by dr. Călin Şuteu, with Gigapixel Art SRL, whom we thank this way for the granted support.

<sup>10</sup> Similar rendering in the work of C. Beldiman (BELDIMAN 1989, Fig. 5/21).

## A FEW ASPECTS RELATED TO THE ORIGIN AND DIFFUSION OF MIRRORS WITH SIDE HANDLE AND DECORATED REVERSE

In the north-Pontic Barbarian environment of the last centuries BC – early centuries AD, the number of mirrors as well as their typological variety is significant, especially in the first centuries AD. The large number of mirrors contributed over the course of time to the draft of several typologies of such artefacts from said area and period. Special attention was granted to disc mirrors with pierced side handle in a rectangular shape of the first centuries AD, distributed across the entire territory comprised between the Volga and the Lower Danube.

Disc mirrors with rectangular side handles were ascribed by A. M. Khazanov to type IX in his typology<sup>11</sup>. Chronologically, he differentiated based on appearance, a variation with conical projection midway the disc and another with relief decoration depicting various patterns on the reverse, most often, solar symbols or tamgas<sup>12</sup>. The mirrors in the first variation were dated by A. M. Khazanov to the 1st – 2nd century AD<sup>13</sup>. Said author rejected P. Rau’s view according to which these mirrors are of Caucasian origin<sup>14</sup>, arguing instead, that their origin lies with the former cultures of Siberia, where their prototypes – mirrors with round, flat disc and side pierced handle – were used for a long period of time. These, in A. M. Khazanov’s view, under the influence of mirrors with thickened rim, central disc projection and nail-shaped handle (type Khazanov VIII), contributed to the design of the mirrors of the type<sup>15</sup>. B.A. Litvinskij<sup>16</sup> did not exclude either such an origin. In agreement with A. M. Khazanov’s view, I. I. Marchenko believes that the analysed type might have been the result of the synthesis between round, flat disc mirrors provided with side pierced handle in the shape of a rectangle (type Marchenko IX.3<sup>17</sup>) and those with thickened rim, nail shaped handle and central conical projection (type Khazanov VIII<sup>18</sup>, Skripkin 6.7<sup>19</sup>, Marchenko VIII.1<sup>20</sup>, Glukhov 6.7.1<sup>21</sup>). This process occurred, according to the same scholar, not in the Volga region, but in the Sarmatian environment of north Caucasus, by the turn of the 1st century BC – 1st century AD<sup>22</sup>.

<sup>11</sup> KHAZANOV 1963, 65-67, Fig. 4.

<sup>12</sup> The marks in relief on mirrors represent, according to the researchers, both property marks, decoration, yet especially religious symbols, while the mirrors with tamgas themselves fulfilled, beside their primary function, also a magical-apotropaic role.

<sup>13</sup> KHAZANOV 1963, 65-67.

<sup>14</sup> KHAZANOV 1963, 65-66.

<sup>15</sup> KHAZANOV 1963, 65-66.

<sup>16</sup> LITVINSKIJ 1971, 47.

<sup>17</sup> MARCHENKO 1996, 24-25.

<sup>18</sup> KHAZANOV 1963, 64-65, Fig. 1/VIII, 3/5.

<sup>19</sup> SKRIPKIN 1990, 95, 152-153, Fig. 36/5-10.

<sup>20</sup> MARCHENKO 1996, 21-23, Fig. 4.

<sup>21</sup> GLUKHOV 2005, 15, 46-47, Fig. 7/4, 6-8, 8/2, 10/1.

<sup>22</sup> MARCHENKO 1996, 27.

Mirrors decorated on the reverse with geometric patterns, solar symbols or tamgas were dated by A. M. Khazanov to the 2nd – 3rd century AD, while their emergence in the towns of Bosphorus was framed by late 1st – 2nd century AD<sup>23</sup>. In the Volga area, the same scholar, noted the existence of a variation characterised by the presence of a rudimentary conical projection midway the disc<sup>24</sup>.

An opposite point of view regarding the origin of the rectangular pierced side handle belongs to M. P. Abramova<sup>25</sup>. Studying disc mirrors with pierced side handle from the north-Caucasian territory, the scholar evidenced the existence of three variations: **1.** With a border by the rim and conical projection in the central disc part; **2.** Decorated on the external part of the disc; **3.** With flat and unadorned surface<sup>26</sup>. The author mentions that the majority of mirrors in variation 12 were discovered on the territory of North Caucasus, while most part come from mountain regions in the central part of Caucasus<sup>27</sup>. Disproving the hypothesis of the Siberian origin of the type mirrors, the same scholar believed that mirrors in the first variation could be likely termed “Caucasian”. Evidence for their Caucasian origin as well as their production in this region, is proven, according to the author, by their large number among the monuments of the late Koban culture<sup>28</sup>. Subsequent to the analysis of all mirrors in the first variation from northern Caucasus, M. P. Abramova reached the conclusion these date to the 1st century – 2nd century AD and that in the same period, they spread to other regions as well<sup>29</sup>. From late 1st century AD, some of the mirrors in this variation start to have decorated reverse<sup>30</sup>. These exemplars, according to M. P. Abramova’s observations, were provided with a border on the rim and a less projecting central convexity, while the decoration is simple, being considered as intermediary form between the mirrors of the two variations involved in the emergence once with the 2nd century AD of the mirrors in the second variation. The latter had a more flattened form and as distinct feature the presence of the decoration on the reverse, being specific to the 2nd – 3rd century AD on the entire space comprised between the Volga and the Lower Danube<sup>31</sup>.

The north-Caucasian origin of mirrors with thickened rim, conical projection and pierced rectangular side handle (type Khazanov IX.1<sup>32</sup>, Skripkin 6.10<sup>33</sup>, Marchenko IX.1<sup>34</sup>, Glukhov 6.10.1<sup>35</sup>, Abramova, variation 1<sup>36</sup>) was also supported by V. B. Vinogradov and V. A. Petrenko. They relate though their emergence to the evolutionary shift of Sarmatian mirrors with thickened rim, nail handle and central conical

projection (type Khazanov VIII, Skripkin 6.7, Marchenko VIII.1, Glukhov 6.7.1). This process, according to the same authors, occurred in the environment of the Syraci Sarmatae established in the pre-Caucasian region. Still they believe that mirrors of the type are of Sarmatian origin, epicentred in north Caucasus, where they were made of local metal and exported to other regions<sup>37</sup>.

A. S. Skripkin evidences among disc mirrors with rectangular pierced side handle from the Sarmatae environment of the Lower Volga and that south the Urals, two existing types: with rim border and central conical projection (type 1) and decorated on the reverse (type 2)<sup>38</sup>.

When correlating the mirrors with the remaining artefacts these were discovered together with, especially brooches, A. S. Skripkin dated mirrors with rim border and central conical projection without decoration on the reverse (type 1)<sup>39</sup> to the 1st century – early 2nd century AD<sup>40</sup>. The author did not exclude their emergence sometime by mid 1st century AD, believing their origin rests with the north-Caucasian region<sup>41</sup>. The emergence of mirrors decorated on the reverse (type 2) in the Lower Volga region and south the Urals is framed by A. S. Skripkin to early 2nd century AD, while their use at large scale, to the second half of the 2nd century – first half of the 3rd century AD<sup>42</sup>.

Upon the analysis of disc mirrors with rectangular pierced side handle from the Don-Volga interfluvium, A. A. Glukhov divided these into two groups. Within the first group were included massive exemplars, yet not very large in size (diameter between 4.5 and 7 cm), with high border on the rim and central conical projection, while in the second, mirrors with low border on the rim, slightly marked conical projection and decoration in relief on their reverse<sup>43</sup>.

V. M. Kosyanenko identified in the Kobyakova cemetery (right to the Lower Don) a number of mirrors with decoration in relief on the external part, which she dated to the 1st century AD<sup>44</sup>.

Subsequent to the analysis of decorated mirrors from the Kobyakovo cemetery, the same scholar succeeded to identify chronological differences for certain decorative patterns on such mirrors<sup>45</sup>, reaching the conclusion that for dating exemplars adorned on the reverse are important not only the morphological features but also the decoration type<sup>46</sup>. Further on, the author noted that during the 1st century AD are specific mirrors with a significant thickness, marked central conical projection, outward edge, rectangular handle occasionally tapering towards the disc and simple

<sup>23</sup> KHAZANOV 1963, 67.

<sup>24</sup> KHAZANOV 1963, 67, Fig. 4/5-9.

<sup>25</sup> ABRAMOVA 1971.

<sup>26</sup> ABRAMOVA 1971, 121-123, Fig. 1.

<sup>27</sup> ABRAMOVA 1971, 125.

<sup>28</sup> ABRAMOVA 1971, 125.

<sup>29</sup> ABRAMOVA 1971, 124-125, 129-131; see also ABRAMOVA 1993, 155, type 5, variation 1, Fig. 60/28-33.

<sup>30</sup> ABRAMOVA 1971, 128-129.

<sup>31</sup> ABRAMOVA 1971, 129-130; see also ABRAMOVA 1993, 167, type 5, variation 2, Fig. 66/40-44.

<sup>32</sup> KHAZANOV 1963, 65-67, Fig. 4/2-4.

<sup>33</sup> SKRIPKIN 1990, 95, 153, Fig. 36/13-18.

<sup>34</sup> MARCHENKO 1996, 24.

<sup>35</sup> GLUKHOV 2003, 93, Fig. 1/6.10.1, 4/3-5; GLUKHOV 2005, 15, 47-48, Fig. 8/3-10.

<sup>36</sup> ABRAMOVA 1971, 121, 125, Fig. 1.

<sup>37</sup> VINOGRADOV/PETRENKO 1976, 44-49.

<sup>38</sup> SKRIPKIN 1984, 47-48.

<sup>39</sup> In his typology, A. S. Skripkin ascribed these mirrors to type 6.10 (SKRIPKIN 1990, 95, 153).

<sup>40</sup> SKRIPKIN 1984, 47-48.

<sup>41</sup> SKRIPKIN 1990, 153.

<sup>42</sup> SKRIPKIN 1984, 48.

<sup>43</sup> GLUKHOV 2005, 15, 47.

<sup>44</sup> KOSYANENKO 1994, 71-73, Fig. 23/2-8; KOSYANENKO 2008, 108-112, Pl. 15/2-8. The main argument for such early emergence of decorated mirrors relies on the find of brooches whose dating, in the case of the Kobyakovo cemetery, was revised based on their find beside wheel-thrown wares made of fine fabric and surface covered with orange-red slip with metallic gloss.

<sup>45</sup> KOSYANENKO 1994, 71-77; KOSYANENKO 2008, 108-117.

<sup>46</sup> Cf. KOSYANENKO 1994, 71-77; KOSYANENKO 2008, 108-117.

decoration consisting of rosettes, circles and rays<sup>47</sup>. For the 2nd – early 3rd century AD mirrors from the graves in the Kobyakovo cemetery, it was noted these are thinner and have smaller side handles, while the convexity in the disc central part was much smaller or replaced a circle<sup>48</sup>. With respect to their decoration, it was noted that it became increasingly complex, being represented most often by circles, marks similar to letter gamma, circles from which start ornaments in the form of “bird feet” and signs in the form of rays with loops by the end, all within a circle, as well as ornaments in the shape of rectangles/squares inscribed in a circle<sup>49</sup>. Some of the mirrors of the period display ornaments in the form of rays<sup>50</sup>. All mirrors with decoration in relief of rectangular/square shape inscribed in a circle date, with one exception<sup>51</sup>, according to V. M. Kosyanenko, to the second half of the 2nd – early 3rd century AD<sup>52</sup>.

M. V. Krivosheev, based on the features defining the present decoration and its patterns, defined the variations of the two types of disc mirrors with rectangular pierced side handle from the Sarmatae environment of the southern part of the Volga-Don interfluvium<sup>53</sup>. To the first type were ascribed mirrors with central conical projection, while to the second type those decorated. Within the second type were established, based on decoration, three variants (A, B, V). Thus, in variation “A” were ascribed decorated mirrors on the reverse with circles from which start ornaments in the shape of rays with loops by the end, all within another circle, in variation “B” those with decoration in the shape of a square inscribed in a circle, while in variation “V” those with various ornaments or undecorated. In addition, the same author clarified the chronological frame of the existing mirror types in the Sarmatian environment of the region under discussion. In the Sarmatian graves from the Don river, decorated mirrors are rather rare<sup>54</sup>, yet they are found at Tanais and nearby.

T. N. Vysotskaya, subsequent to the analysis of the graves with such mirrors from the Ust'-Al'ma cemetery (Crimea), noted that exemplars with thickened rim, conical projection and side handle emerge in the 1st century AD, while those decorated on the reverse are found in the graves of this cemetery from the second half of the 1st century AD, their great majority being from 2nd – 3rd century AD graves<sup>55</sup>. At a careful examination of the grave goods of the two graves where identified mirrors were decorated on the external part of the disc, dated to the second half of the 1st century AD, it may be noted though that one of these dates rather to late 1st century – early 2nd century AD, while the second to the early/first half of the 2nd century AD.

An analysis of disc mirrors with pierced side handle dated to the first centuries AD from the cemeteries in Crimea was carried out by A. A. Trufanov<sup>56</sup>. The author evidenced eight existing variations, of which seven are with decoration in relief on the reverse (variations 2-8). Undecorated mirrors with central projection were ascribed to the first variation, in which, based on specific features, were identified three subvariations (1A, 1B, 1V)<sup>57</sup>. The massive mirrors from variation 1A were dated to the second half of the 1st century AD, and their emergence in Crimea, placed towards mid 1st century AD<sup>58</sup>. In the case of mirrors from variations 1B and 1V is mentioned that on the territory of Crimea, earliest exemplars come features of the last third/late 1st century AD.

Regarding the decorated mirrors, it must be mentioned that A. A. Trufanov ascribed to the early variations the massive exemplars with central hemi-spherical projection and a significant variety of ornaments without clear standards (circles surrounding the central projection; radial ornaments or in the form of radial rays; rectangles from which start straight lines or line groups; circles surrounding the central projection from which start in the four cardinal directions line groups, between these being placed marks in the form of letter gamma). These were framed to variations 2-5 and mainly come from features dated to late 1st century – first half of the 2nd century AD<sup>59</sup>. A few mirror exemplars in these variations were yet discovered in graves from the second half of the 2nd century AD, the second half of the 2nd century – early 3rd century AD or late 2nd century AD – first half of the 3rd century AD<sup>60</sup>.

Decorated mirrors believed of later date, were framed by the same author to variations 6-8. These are thin in cross-section and are characterised by a much smaller or missing convexity midway the disc, while the standard ornaments (circles from which start patterns in the form of “bird feet” and marks in the form of rays with loops by the end, all within a circle; ornaments in the form of “bird feet” and marks in the form of rays with loops by the end starting from the centre of the mirror disc; ornaments in the form of rays with volutes by the ends). Missing from the territory of Crimea are mirrors whose decoration consists of a rectangle/square inscribed in a circle<sup>61</sup>, often found on second half of the 2nd century – first half of the 3rd century AD mirrors from the Volga area and the Lower Don, as well as in the southern part of the territory between the Volga and Don<sup>62</sup>. Mirrors with such decoration are also known in the Sarmatae environment of the north-west Pontic area. Rarely found in Crimea are also the mirrors decorated with various tamgas in relief on the external side, only a few exemplars<sup>63</sup> being currently known.

<sup>56</sup> TRUFANOV 2007, 173-186.

<sup>57</sup> TRUFANOV 2007, 175-176, Fig. 1/1-4 (variation 1A), Fig. 1/5-6 (variation 1B), Fig. 1/7-10 (variation 1V).

<sup>58</sup> TRUFANOV 2007, 175, 180.

<sup>59</sup> TRUFANOV 2007, 176-178, 180, Fig. 1/11-12 (variation 2), Fig. 2/1-8, 5/2-3, 7-11 (variation 3A), Fig. 2/9-12, 5/9 (variation 3B), Fig. 3/3-6 (variation 4), Fig. 3/1-2, 7-9, 5/13 (variation 5).

<sup>60</sup> TRUFANOV 2007, 177, 178, Fig. 2/8-10, 3/7-9, 5/13.

<sup>61</sup> TRUFANOV 2007, 179.

<sup>62</sup> KOSYANENKO 1994, 75-77, 25/1-5; KOSYANENKO 2008, 114, 116, 117, Pl. 17/1-5; KRIVOSHEEV 2004, 119, Fig. II/15-16; KRIVOSHEEV 2005, 51, 96-97, Fig. 42/4-6, 43/3.

<sup>63</sup> Amicable information Anastasiya Stoyanova (Sevastopol, Crimea). See also TRUFANOV 2007, 179, Fig. 6/35; PUZDROVSKIY 2007, 153, Pl. 129/18).

<sup>47</sup> KOSYANENKO 1994, 71-74, 76, Fig. 23/2-8; KOSYANENKO 2008, 116, Pl. 15/2-8.

<sup>48</sup> KOSYANENKO 1994, 76; KOSYANENKO 2008, 111, 117.

<sup>49</sup> KOSYANENKO 1994, 76-77, Fig. 24/1-6, 25/1-5; KOSYANENKO 2008, 111, 117, Pl. 16/1-6, 17/1-5.

<sup>50</sup> KOSYANENKO 1994, 74, 76, Fig. 23/9; KOSYANENKO 2008, 112, 117, Pl. 15/9.

<sup>51</sup> KOSYANENKO 1994, 76, Fig. 25/6; KOSYANENKO 2008, 116, Pl. 17/6.

<sup>52</sup> KOSYANENKO 1994, 76; KOSYANENKO 2008, 116.

<sup>53</sup> KRIVOSHEEV 2005, 51, 95-97, Fig. 42/1 (type 1), 42/2-3 (type 2.A), 42/4-6, 43/3 (type 2.B), 43/1-2, 4-6 (type 2.V).

<sup>54</sup> MAKSIMENKO 1998, 131.

<sup>55</sup> VYSOTSKAYA 1994, 117.

According to A. A. Trufanov, on the territory of Crimea, earliest decorated mirrors originate in features dated to the last quarter/late 1st century AD, while decorated mirrors ascribed to late variations being to enter this region during the first half of the 2nd century AD, being found until late 3rd century AD<sup>64</sup>.

Starting from the view that in the Volga area and that south the Urals, decorated mirrors emerge only by early 2nd century AD, starting to be used on large scale only by mid century, A. A. Trufanov assumed that mirrors with decoration in relief on the reverse were formed in territories from the north of the Black Sea, for variations 6-7 choosing the Bosporan region<sup>65</sup>.

Recently, subsequent the analysis of graves with mirrors decorated on the reverse from the Meotian cemeteries, N. Yu. Limberis and I. I. Marchenko maintained they emerged in the region to the right of the Kuban as early as the first half of the 1st century AD<sup>66</sup>. Given exemplars are characterised by massive disc, thickened rim and projection in central disc part<sup>67</sup>, which further proves these originate from unornamented mirrors. The two scholars argue that their emergence in the first half of the 1st century AD may be indicative of their possible parallel development with those undecorated with projection midway the disc<sup>68</sup>.

At a careful examination of the brooches that these mirrors appear with in Meotian graves, their ascribing and framing is debatable. For instance, both the brooch in G 36 from cemetery no. 3 at Starokorsunskaya and the two specimens from G 298 at Spornoe<sup>69</sup> belong to group 4, series I, variation 2 in V. V. Kropotov's typology<sup>70</sup> and not in variation 1 as argued<sup>71</sup>. Such brooches, numerous in the environment of the north-Pontic area cultural identities, date to the second half of the 1st century – early 2nd century AD<sup>72</sup>. The Spornoe mirror lacks the projection from the central disc part.

To the second half of the 1st century AD dates in our view also G 60v from cemetery no. 2 at Starokorsunskaya, whose grave goods also included an Aucissa brooch<sup>73</sup> of type 5.2 in E. Riha's typology<sup>74</sup>. The dating and use of such brooches is not limited to mid 1st century AD, as they remained in use for quite a long period of time, even though unfashionable, in both the Barbarian and Roman provincial environments<sup>75</sup>. In the Sarmatian setting of the north-

Pontic area west of the Don, Aucissa brooches come from grave furnishings with eastern features<sup>76</sup> that belong to the new Sarmatian wave arriving from the east once with mid 1st century AD, which indicates a most definite use of such brooches in the north-Pontic Sarmatian environment of the second half of the 1st century AD. In fact, a careful analysis of all finds of Aucissa brooches from eastern Europe (149 specimens) concluded that in this geographical area, these come from graves dated to the second half of the 1st century – early 2nd century AD, being rare in features dated to most part of the 2nd century AD<sup>77</sup>.

Decorated mirrors from the Meotian graves of the second half of the 1st century – early 2nd century AD continue to preserve a significant thickness and the central projection, while in the first half of the 2nd century AD these are still often found in Meotian graves from the Kuban region<sup>78</sup>. In the case of some of the specimens dated to the last chronological time span, notably, they are much thinner in cross-section, while the central convexity is much smaller. Once with the first half of the 2nd century AD, decorated mirrors without central projection are increasingly frequent in the Meotian environment<sup>79</sup>. For the environment of the Sarmatian Syracas of the Kuban region, it was noted that mirrors decorated on the reverse are found in graves only beside 2nd century brooches<sup>80</sup>.

In the Sarmatae environment of the area between the Dnieper and the Prut, the great majority of mirrors decorated on the reverse mainly come from graves dated to the second half of the 2nd century – first half of the 3rd century AD<sup>81</sup>, yet emerged in the region, as seem to indicate certain finds, little prior mid 2nd century AD. Some mirrors of the type are rare in graves dated to the mid and second half of the 3rd century AD<sup>82</sup>, like at T 5 G 1 at Vladychen' (Fig. 4/6), T 12 G 1 at Balki (Fig. 4/11), T 13 G 1 at Kurchi (Fig. 4/7), T 3 G 1 at Kubej (Fig. 10/4) or Cimişlia. Worth of mention in the case of this area is the presence of a slate mould for casting such mirrors, discovered at Lipceni (Republic of Moldova)<sup>83</sup>.

For the eastern and south-eastern territories of Romania it may be noted the lack of disc mirrors with border on the rim, central projection of the disc, without decoration

<sup>64</sup> TRUFANOV 2007, 180. See also PUZDROVSKIJ 2007, 153. For a series of more recent finds of decorated mirrors on the territory of Crimea see PUZDROVSKIJ/TRUFANOV 2016, 13, 35, 42, 80, 86, Fig. 11/13-14, 55/1, 75/5, 143/12.154/6, 167/10, 170/4; KHRAPUNOV 2013, 42-43, Fig. 34/15, 17-19.

<sup>65</sup> TRUFANOV 2007, 180.

<sup>66</sup> LIMBERIS/MARCHENKO 2018.

<sup>67</sup> LIMBERIS/MARCHENKO 2018, 202-204, 215, Fig. 1/1, 7.

<sup>68</sup> LIMBERIS/MARCHENKO 2018, 215.

<sup>69</sup> LIMBERIS/MARCHENKO 2018, 202, 204, Fig. 1/2, 5-6.

<sup>70</sup> KROPOTOV 2010, 72, 74, Fig. 31-32.

<sup>71</sup> LIMBERIS/MARCHENKO 2018, 202, 204. Upper chronological limit of brooches in variation 1 is framed by V. V. Kropotov by mid 1st century AD (KROPOTOV 2010, 72). A. K. Ambroz limits the use of brooches in variation 1 to the 1st century AD. (AMBROZ 1966, 48, Pl. 9/1-5).

<sup>72</sup> KROPOTOV 2010, 74.

<sup>73</sup> LIMBERIS/MARCHENKO 2018, 204, Fig. 1/8.

<sup>74</sup> RIHA 1979, 114-120, Pl. 23-24; RIHA 1994, 100-107, Pl. 18-19.

<sup>75</sup> Cf. BÖHME 1972, 11; ETTLINGER 1973, 29, 93-96, type 29-30; FEUGÈRE 1985, 323-324; RIHA 1979, 114-115; RIHA 1994, 101-107;

COCIŞ 2004, 78, Pl. XLV; for the finds and dating of such brooches in Crimea see PUZDROVSKIJ 2007, 174, Fig. 194/5-6; TRUFANOV 2009, 201, 277, Fig. 52-3-6; while for those on the territory of pre-Roman Dacia see RUSTOIU 1997, 60, type 29, Fig. 70/1, 71/1-4.

<sup>76</sup> KOSTENKO 1993, 78, 81, 105, Fig. 24/22, 26/22; SIMONENKO 2008, 30, 65, Pl. 52/2, 55/5; SIMONENKO 2011, 19, 21, Fig. 10/1-2; BĂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 157, Fig. 58/8; BĂRCĂ 2011, 10-11, Fig. 1/8.

<sup>77</sup> See KROPOTOV 2010, 273, 276-279, 343, Fig. 77/II. For a series of more recent finds of Aucissa brooches see AKHMEDOV 2020. K. Hellström, based on views expressed by scholars on the chronology of Aucissa brooches in territories from the north of the Black Sea, has recently suggested a dating of the pieces from said area to the timeframe between late 1st century BC and early 3rd century AD (HELLSTRÖM 2018, 102).

<sup>78</sup> See LIMBERIS/MARCHENKO 2018, 204-215, Fig. 2/1, 6, 9, 4/5, 8, 5/1, 3, 5, 6/1, 7, 7/5, 8, 10, 12, 8/4, 6; MARČENKO/LIMBERIS 2008, Pl. 146/5, 161/3, 170/6, 180/5, 187/6, 190/4.

<sup>79</sup> LIMBERIS/MARCHENKO 2018, 209, 213-215, Fig. 3/1, 4, 7, 4/1, 7/1. See also MARČENKO/LIMBERIS 2008, Pl. 118/6, 188/5.

<sup>80</sup> MARCHENKO 1996, 24.

<sup>81</sup> SIMONENKO 2004, 152; BĂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 246-249; BĂRCĂ 2015, 47 with complete bibliography.

<sup>82</sup> Cf. SIMONENKO 2004, 152; BĂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, p. 247.

<sup>83</sup> GROSU 1983, 35-36, Fig. II/10.

on the reverse<sup>84</sup>. Regarding the mirrors decorated on the reverse, these are frequent in the mentioned territories. They mainly come from Sarmatian graves<sup>85</sup>, however these were also discovered in graves and settlements from areas east of the Carpathians, being ascribed to the Carpi, and to a less extent in settlements on the territory of Muntenia, ascribed to the Free Dacians<sup>86</sup>. In the latter, moulds for casting such mirrors were also identified. For instance, in the *București-Militari*<sup>87</sup> settlement, a mould of clayish schist surviving almost intact (Fig. 9/1-2), as well as fragments of three different mould types<sup>88</sup> were discovered. A clay made, fine fabric mould for casting such mirrors was found in the Buriaș village, Periș commune (Ilfov county)<sup>89</sup> within the area of a possible (according to the pottery fragments) 2nd – 4th century AD settlement<sup>90</sup>. Another mould, still novel, was discovered in the 4th century AD settlement of Dulceanca II, in 1977, in the levelling layer by the base of a hut, carried there, according to C. Preda, from a nearby settlement of the Free Dacians<sup>91</sup>.

In the case of mirrors with decoration on the reverse from the territory of Romania, it is noted that specimens with hemispherical/ conical projection in the middle part of the disc and well marked border on the rim, are represented by not many. Most decorated mirrors are thin in cross-section and have a poorly marked rim. The convexity in the central disc part is very small or inexistent, while the sizes of the side handle are small. Another observation worth made is that mirrors decorated with tamgas on the reverse are found in a larger number compared to other geographical regions with finds of mirrors of the type. Lacking from finds on the Romanian territory are the mirrors whose decoration consists of a rectangle/square inscribed in a circle, like on second half of the 2nd century - first half of the 3rd century AD mirrors from the Volga and the Lower Don area. The decoration on the mirrors from Romania lack circles in the central part from where start ornaments in the shape of „bird paws” or marks in the form of rays with loops by the end, all within another circle. Also, are not found ornaments in the form of “bird paws”, those in the form of rays with loops by the end starting from the central of the mirror disc and those in the form of rays with volutes by the end.

Based on the discovery features and contexts of the mirrors from the eastern and south-eastern territories of

<sup>84</sup> The most western find of such a mirror comes from the Sarmatian grave no. 1 at Tătărauca Nouă V – “Piscul Gol” (to the right of the Dniester, Republic of Moldova), dated to the second half of the 1st century AD (BĂRCĂ 2006, 152, 364-365, Fig. 127/6, 186/5).

<sup>85</sup> BICHIR 1971, 280; BICHIR 1977, 186,

<sup>86</sup> See BICHIR 1973, 106-111, BICHIR 1984, 51-52. The presence of these mirrors both with the Sarmatae and the “Carpi” made Gh. Bichir title them as *Sarmatian-Carpic* mirrors (see BICHIR 1971, 280, 285 with note 285; BICHIR 1973, 108; BICHIR 1977, 186) inadequately, even though the number of such pieces in the “Carpian culture” is rather representative. In this respect, we wish to mention that although such mirrors were used in the Meotian or Late Scythian settings, where they emerge in larger numbers than in that of the “Carpi”, they were not named Sarmatian-Meotian or Sarmatian-Scythian mirrors.

<sup>87</sup> BICHIR 1984, 24, Pl. XXX/5, LIV/1.

<sup>88</sup> BICHIR 1972, 161; BICHIR 1973, 109; BICHIR 1984, 24, Pl. XXX/5, LIV/1.

<sup>89</sup> Constantin Preda located these places in the county of Prahova (PREDA 1986, 341).

<sup>90</sup> PREDA 1986, 341, Fig. 1.

<sup>91</sup> PREDA 1986, 342-343.

Romania it may be concluded these emerge there sometime by mid 2nd century AD and mainly originate in graves and features of the second half of the 2nd century – first half of the 3rd century AD<sup>92</sup>. There are cases when such mirrors were discovered in features whose dating may also include the first part of the second half of the 3rd century AD, yet a detailed analysis of such mirrors and features shall be the focus of another paper. The mirrors identified in Romania are of small sizes, thin in cross-section and have poorly marked border on the rim. The central convexity lacks with most of them, while specimens where it is present, are characterised by very small sizes. All these features are specific, mainly, to decorated mirrors of the second half of the 2nd – first half of the 3rd century AD.

Mirrors of the type with and without decoration on the reverse, so common for territories between the Volga – the pre-mountain region of North Caucasus in the east and the Lower Danube – the Carpathian Mountains in the west, lack in the Sarmatae environment of the Great Hungarian Plain. Currently, in this geographical area is known only one mirror of the sort, yet which originates in the territory of the former Roman province of Pannonia inferior, at Dunaújváros (Intercisa)<sup>93</sup> (Fig. 11/4). The exemplar is related to the material culture of the eastern Sarmatians<sup>94</sup>, however its emergence in the east of this Roman province is also regarded as being in connection with the settlement of the Carpi<sup>95</sup>.

Worth mention is the presence of a few such mirrors decorated with tamgas in the territories from Western Europe, where they seem to have been used also later, in the early period of the Great Migrations<sup>96</sup>. We believe though in their case that they have no chronological value on the territory where they were found, being a relic. The presence of such mirrors, beside other Pontic and Caucasian artefact and element classes, often of Sarmatian-Alanic provenance, discovered in western Europe<sup>97</sup> is the result of the movement of groups of Alans, together with other groups of Germanic populaces, from eastern and central Europe westwards, once with the Hunnic invasion during the start period of the Great Migrations<sup>98</sup>.

## NOTES ON THE TAMGAS

A very similar tamga to those on the Sebeș - “Podul Pripocului” mirror is found on a mirror of the type from

<sup>92</sup> Gh. Bichir appreciated that the majority of the mirrors of the type discovered in Romania dates to late 2nd century – first half of the 3rd century AD (BICHIR 1973, 111) or the 2nd century – first half of the 3rd century AD (BICHIR 1976, 157).

<sup>93</sup> ISTVÁNOVITS/KULCSÁR 2003, 75-78; ISTVÁNOVITS/KULCSÁR 2006, 176, Fig. 2/6; ISTVÁNOVITS/KULCSÁR 2017, 243, Fig. 191/1; BĂRCĂ 2018, 45, Fig. 2/2

<sup>94</sup> KUL'CHAR *et alii* 2020, 213.

<sup>95</sup> TÓTH 2005, 372-373, Fig. 8a.

<sup>96</sup> KUZNETSOV 1996, 72, 74-75, Fig. 1/ 1, 5; KAZANSKI 1986, 35-36, Fig. 2; KAZANSKI 1995, 42, Fig. 7/2, 10; KAZANSKI 2020, 60, 66, Fig. 4/7, 9, 11/2; KAZANSKI 2020a, 837, Fig. 25.2/7, 9, 15; KAZANSKI 2013, 149, Fig. 2/6, 10, 14, 19.

<sup>97</sup> For a presentation of these finds see KAZANSKI 2013; KAZANSKI 2020; KAZANSKI 2020a with complete bibliography of the three studies.

<sup>98</sup> For detailed analysis see KAZANSKI 2020; KAZANSKI 2020a; KAZANSKI 2020.

T 3 G 1 at Kubej<sup>99</sup> (Fig. 10/4), the grave being dated in the second half of the 3rd century AD<sup>100</sup>, although the bowl and golden necklace possibly date it earlier.

Among very close parallels counts also a tamga indicated as from the milieu of the mountain peoples from western Caucasus<sup>101</sup> (Fig. 12/4), and other two on the limestone plaque from Panticapaeum<sup>102</sup> (Fig. 15/1[11-12], 4-5), yet also the mould used for casting mirrors of the type from the București-*Militari*<sup>103</sup> settlement (Fig. 9/1). The four tamgas above differentiate from those on the Sebeş - "Podul Pripocului" mirror by the fact that the perpendicular spindles with outward loops are less distanced in between.

Very similar is also the tamga on the golden plaque with decorated surface depicting three wolves (?) running left from the looted Sarmatian grave at Dunaharaszti<sup>104</sup> (Fig. 11/1-3). The Dunaharaszti plaque is dated to the second half of the 1st century AD and reached the Great Hungarian Plain likely, as previously mentioned<sup>105</sup>, sometime towards late 1st century AD (the 80'ies AD), when very likely occurred another Sarmatian migration to the region<sup>106</sup>. Among very close parallels also counts the tamgas on the limestone stela of Krivoj Rog<sup>107</sup> (Fig. 14/B) and the tamga on the limestone plaque of Panticapaeum<sup>108</sup> (Fig. 15/3). To these add the tamga from N. Moroşan's study<sup>109</sup> (Fig. 12/1), according to which it comes from a Byzantine funerary tombstone<sup>110</sup>. This is also found in the book dedicated to the tamgas from the north of the Black Sea of V. S. Drachuk, who yet mentions that the item's findspot is unknown<sup>111</sup> (Fig. 12/2). The spindles with outward loops of the four tamgas mentioned above start from the same point of the volute and distance from one another gradually.

Other few tamgas that may be deemed similar are found on the marble lion no. 2 at Olbia<sup>112</sup> (Fig. 12/5[15]); 13), the wooden harp from a Sarmatian grave at Kozyrka<sup>113</sup>, the limestone plaque at Panticapaeum<sup>114</sup> (Fig. 15/1[35]),

the limestone stela of Krivoj Rog<sup>115</sup> (Fig. 14/A), the golden bracelet of Olbia<sup>116</sup> (Fig. 15/6), as well as the milieu of the mountain people from west Caucasus<sup>117</sup> (Fig. 12/3). However, these differentiate from those on the mirror of Sebeş - "Podul Pripocului" by the fact that the spindles with outward wavy loops start from the same point as a single stem and divide into two on the way.

Most above mentioned tamgas are specific, as well noted by S. A. Yatsenko<sup>118</sup>, to the region right to the Dnieper. With respect to their dating, these are characteristic to the period comprised between the second half of the 1st century AD – mid 3rd century AD. Lastly, in the north-Pontic area there are numerous tamgas with components similar with the tamgas on the Sebeş - "Podul Pripocului"<sup>119</sup> mirror, however these may not be deemed as parallels<sup>120</sup>. Tamgas with certain deviations must be considered as belonging to other individuals, most likely from the same clan or tribe/group.

### A FEW FINALS NOTES

It may be concluded based on the above, that the item of Sebeş - "Podul Pripocului" belongs to the mirror type broadly used in the area between the Volga and the Lower Danube in the 2nd century – first half of the 3rd century AD. These were specific especially to the Sarmatian world, yet are found also in the environment of other cultural identities from the mentioned geographic area. The main role in their diffusion on expanse areas, those east and south-east of Carpathians included, belonged to the Sarmatae. The use of these toiletries in various regions from such an expanse area evidences existing connections between persons and groups from different cultural identities, determined by the individual and collective mobility generating the transfer to the area of several artefact classes. The presence of these mirrors among cultural identities from certain territories between the Volga and the Lower Danube is indicative of both existing relations between different cultural groups as well as their cohabiting in certain regions for long time spans. Territories east and south-east the Carpathians are no exception, as over the course of the 2nd century – 4th century AD several cultural groups co-habited there, among which also the Sarmatae.

Things are rather complicated in the case of the Sebeş - "Podul Pripocului" mirror, firstly because it is singular in the intra-Carpathian area, which lay within the province of Dacia sometime in the third quarter of the 3rd century AD, secondly because from its find and most recent research carried out in the settlement, no further systematic archaeological excavations were conducted that would yield additional important information for clarifying certain aspects related to the mirror's presence in the given area.

<sup>115</sup> Cf. SOLOMONIK 1959, 98, 168, no. 70; YATSENKO 2001, 68-69, Fig. 12.

<sup>116</sup> SOLOMONIK 1959, 131, no. 70; YATSENKO 2001, 85, Fig. 5/83; MORDVINTSEVA/TREJSTER 2007, I, 146, II, 146 cat. no. B/1.13, III, Pl. 6/B/1.13, 61/B/1.13; FLESS/TREISTER 2007, 176, Fig. 7/3.

<sup>117</sup> DRACHUK 1975, 150, Pl. XXIII//14.

<sup>118</sup> YATSENKO 2001, 78.

<sup>119</sup> See for these SOLOMONIK 1959; DRACHUK 1975; YATSENKO 2001.

<sup>120</sup> For the tamgas deemed identical, related or without any connection, as well as the main means of forming new ones see YATSENKO 2001, 19-21, 25-26, 48-50.

<sup>99</sup> SUBBOTIN/DZIGOVSKIY 1990, 17, Fig. 15/4; SIMONENKO 2008, Pl. 162/7; BĂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, Fig. 98/7. The Kubej cemetery lies at 3 km south the place at Chervonoarmejsk, Bolgrad district, Odessa region, Ukraine.

<sup>100</sup> BĂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009, 247.

<sup>101</sup> DRACHUK 1975, 150, Pl. XXIII//15.

<sup>102</sup> SOLOMONIK 1959, 103, 168, no. 68; DRACHUK 1975, Pl. VI/382, 436; XXXV/[11-12]; YATSENKO 2001, 66, Fig. 9a.

<sup>103</sup> BICHIR 1984, 24, Pl. XXX/5, LIV/1.

<sup>104</sup> VADAY 1989, 129, Fig. I/5; ISHTVANOVICH/KUL'CHAR 1998, 11, Fig. 10/2; ISTVÁNOVITS/KULCSÁR 1997, 161, Pl. XX/1; ISTVÁNOVITS/KULCSÁR 2006, 176, Fig. 1; ISTVÁNOVITS/KULCSÁR 2017, 243, Fig. 190; BĂRCĂ 2018, 43, Fig. 1/5, 2/1.

<sup>105</sup> BĂRCĂ 2014, 66. This view was also expressed by E. Istvánovits and V. Kulcsár (ISTVÁNOVITS/KULCSÁR 2014, 222; ISTVÁNOVITS/KULCSÁR 2017, 246).

<sup>106</sup> BĂRCĂ 2018, 46.

<sup>107</sup> Cf. SOLOMONIK 1959, 98, 168, no. 70; YATSENKO 2001, 68-69, Fig. 12.

<sup>108</sup> SOLOMONIK 1959, 103, 168, no. 56.

<sup>109</sup> MOROŞAN 1938, 42, Fig. 2/39.

<sup>110</sup> MOROŞAN 1938, 43.

<sup>111</sup> DRACHUK 1975, 119, no. 365, Pl. VI/365.

<sup>112</sup> Cf. DRACHUK 1975, Pl. L/15; YATSENKO 2001, 67, Fig. 11.

<sup>113</sup> SYMONENKO 1999, 111-114, Fig. 7/13; SIMONENKO 2004a, 209-221; Fig. 15/13; YATSENKO 2001, 77-78, Fig. 25/25. The Kozyrka grave is dated to late 1st century AD (SIMONENKO 2004a, 221).

<sup>114</sup> SOLOMONIK 1959, 103, 168, no. 65; DRACHUK 1975, Pl. XXXV-XXXVI; YATSENKO 2001, 66.

Ioan Al. Aldea believed the Sebeş mirror reached Transylvania in the 3rd century AD, because of the Carpi, once with their invasion and settlement of the former province territory<sup>121</sup>. Since the mirror is a singular find, unaccompanied in the Sebeş - "Podul Pripocului" settlement by other materials from the east-Carpathian area, the same author argues that it is difficult to say whether it reached once with the Carpi invasion of AD 245 or after AD 271, when are reported further Carpi entries in Moldavia<sup>122</sup>. Gh. Bichir appreciated, given the large number and significance of these artefacts in the Sarmatae environment, that the Sebeş - "Podul Pripocului" mirror could not reach Transylvania by trade, proving the ethnic presence of certain Sarmatae or Carpi<sup>123</sup>, choosing the latter<sup>124</sup>. The same scholar proposes the mirror dated no later than the second half of the 3rd century AD<sup>125</sup>. When discussing decorated mirrors on the reverse within a broader context, Gh. Bichir concluded that the majority of those discovered on the Romanian territory come from features dated to the 2nd century AD – first half of the 3rd century AD, mentioning though that the latest exemplars do not exceed much the mid 3rd century AD<sup>126</sup>. For this dating extension, the same scholar mentioned the finds from G 320 and G 327 in the Poieniști cemetery, whose dating though, does not exceed the mid 3rd century AD. C. H. Opreanu believes that for now, there are no reasons to ascribe the mirror to the Carpi not the Sarmatae, arguing the artefact very likely indicates a Barbarian presence in the "Podul Pripocului" settlement<sup>127</sup>.

The mirror whose dating is independent of the remaining finds in the Sebeş - "Podul Pripocului" settlement, may be related to the artefacts from pit no. 4, investigated in 1960, whose filling contained several fragmentary pottery vessels, a few Roman brick fragments and a bronze brooch. The feature was dated on the basis of the brooch to the second half of the 3rd century AD, however agreeing with also, given the pottery and reused Roman bricks, a date later to the Roman rule, the 4th century AD<sup>128</sup>. The brooch is springed, while the rectangular body is curved and has a slightly half-circular cross-section. The foot, short compared to the body, is returned, forming a half-circular catchplate wounding on the lower body part by a few revolutions. The brooch was two-piece (Fig. 3/3) and seems to belong to type 37a3a in S. Cociș's typology<sup>129</sup>.

<sup>121</sup> ALDEA 1971, 698, 700. The same author considers that the mirror reached in the Sebeş - "Podul Pripocului" settlement subsequent to the entry of scattered Carpic elements in the 3rd century Transylvania (ALDEA 1971, 698).

<sup>122</sup> ALDEA 1971, 700.

<sup>123</sup> BICHIR 1973, 168; BICHIR 1976, 157.

<sup>124</sup> BICHIR 1973, 111, 168. Beyond any other aspects and discussions, we wish to mention that if we agree that the mirror reached the area once with the invasion and settlement of the Carpi, then we may admit the presence among them of Sarmatae elements, especially since the Carpi, similarly to other ethno-politic entities of the first centuries AD, were rather a multi-ethnic conglomerate.

<sup>125</sup> BICHIR 1973, 168; BICHIR 1976, 157.

<sup>126</sup> BICHIR 1973, 111; BICHIR 1976, 101. In his 1973 work, Gh. Bichir dated the mirrors of the type from Romania to late 2nd century – first half of the 3rd century AD (BICHIR 1973, 111).

<sup>127</sup> OPREANU 1998, 104.

<sup>128</sup> HOREDT *et alii* 1967, 25.

<sup>129</sup> COCIȘ 2004, 143, cat. no. 1826-1837, Pl. CXXXII/1826-1832, CXXXIII/1833, 1835-1837.

In the Barbarian environment yet also Roman provincial by the Lower and Middle Danube<sup>130</sup>, brooches with similar morphology are specific mainly to the chronological frame between late 2nd century AD and late 3rd century AD (stages C1a-C2 in the Central-European chronology)<sup>131</sup>. The distribution area of these brooches clearly clusters in the Barbarian world, mainly that Germanic or in close connection with it, originating in the Germanic setting of the northern territories<sup>132</sup>, where, in fact, are also the most early finds and the most discovered specimens. Such brooches are frequent in Dacia as well<sup>133</sup>, in mainly the territory of Dacia Porolissensis<sup>134</sup>. Brooches with returned foot belonging to different variations are found in the settlement of Soporul de Câmpie and Obreja<sup>135</sup> too, where we are dealing with Barbarian communities from the east-Carpathian area colonized in Dacia after the Marcomannic Wars<sup>136</sup>.

In the current context, based on existing finds, especially the mirror and brooch, a 4th century AD date is not supported, at most the second half of the 3rd century AD<sup>137</sup>.

We believe that owing to this object's significance, yet especially the tamgas function and borrowing mechanism by the neighbouring populaces<sup>138</sup>, it did not reach the intra-Carpathian area via trade or exchanges. The view that the mirror records the ethnic presence of the Carpi in the Sebeş - "Podul Pripocului" settlement in the second half of the 3rd century, for the lack of other supportive artefacts or elements, requires more conclusive evidence, alike that according to which the mirror reached Transylvania owing to the Carpi, subsequent to the events around mid 3rd century AD or those by the end of the third quarter of the same century.

In addition, the pottery from pit no. 4, where the brooch was also found, belongs to forms specific to the 2nd – 3rd century AD<sup>139</sup>, while the Roman bricks might have been reused in the period until mid 3rd century AD. Given the brooch and pottery dating, including those discovered more recently<sup>140</sup>, it is very likely that "Podul Pripocului"

<sup>130</sup> For an overview of the origin and diffusion of brooches with returned foot see BĂRCĂ 2014; COCIȘ 2014 with complete bibliography.

<sup>131</sup> See COCIȘ 2004, 146-147; BĂRCĂ 2014; BĂRCĂ 2014, 111-115; ANDRZEJOWSKI 2017; ANDRZEJOWSKI 2018.

<sup>132</sup> ANDRZEJOWSKI 2017; ANDRZEJOWSKI, 2018; See also COCIȘ 2014, 131; BĂRCĂ 2014, 30.

<sup>133</sup> Cf. COCIȘ 2004, 142-147, type 37a.

<sup>134</sup> Following the migration of new Germanic communities moving from the north these brooches spread also in the territories south and south-east.

<sup>135</sup> See COCIȘ 2004.

<sup>136</sup> Cf. OPREANU 1998, 101-104, 114-115.

<sup>137</sup> Confirmation of inhabitation in the Sebeş - "Podul Pripocului" settlement, over the course of a chronological timeframe of the 4th century AD, would be substantiated only by future research.

<sup>138</sup> For main and secondary functions of certain tamgas see OL'KHOVSKIJ 2001; YATSENKO 2001, 14-15, 22-23; VORONYATOV 2009.

<sup>139</sup> Amicable information dr. Viorica Rusu-Bolindelț (National Museum of Transylvanian History) and dr. Robert Gindele (County Museum of Satu Mare), whom we thank this way too. For instance, the wheel-thrown vessel of greyish fabric has everted rim, short neck, delimited by a horizontal rib, curved walls, and ringbase from pit 4 (HOREDT *et alii* 1967, Fig. 10/14) is paralleled in the Poieniști cemetery (SPĂNU 2019, 38, Fig. 6/I.2.1), but also in other cemeteries ascribed to group Poieniști-Vârteșcoiu from the east-Carpathian area (for such vessels see BICHIR 1973; IONIȚĂ/URSACHI 1988).

<sup>140</sup> For 1998 pottery finds see POPA/TOTOIANU 2001, 40-41, Fig. 7/6-16.

settlement's start is placed prior the mid 3rd century AD events<sup>141</sup>. This is not contradicted either by the mirror, especially if we keep in mind the date of the graves and features with such artefacts from territories east of the Carpathians<sup>142</sup>, from where it reached the intra-Carpathian area.

When exactly started and ceased the Sebeş - "Podul Pripocului" settlement is difficult to say currently, however it is clear that there was certain Barbarian presence, of which future research shall find in more detail.

Lastly, if we either agree that the mirror reached the area subsequent to the events around mid 3rd century AD, once with the invasion and settlement of the Carpi in the intra-Carpathian area, or much prior these events, following the colonisation of Barbarian groups from the east-Carpathian area on province territory, it is very likely, that among the Barbarians inhabiting the "Podul Pripocului" settlement also counted the Sarmatae, to whom this mirror with tamgas from the territory of Transylvania is due.

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<sup>141</sup> In this settlement's case, it must be mentioned its location by the Roman road, not far from Apulum, the quartering location of *XIII Gemina*.

<sup>142</sup> At a careful examination of mirror finds of the type at "Podul Pripocului" from the east-Carpathian area, except those from the Sarmatian graves, these mainly come from grave furnishings dated between mid 2nd century AD - first third/half of the 3rd century AD. These come from cemeteries ascribed to group Poienești-Vârteșcoiu, whose ascribing to the "Free Dacians" is most likely (see in this respect SPĂNU 2019, 26-28 with complete bibliography and views expressed in the cultural framing and ethnic ascribing of these cemeteries), yet which most definitely was not purely Dacian. The cemeteries in this group date *grosso modo* between the first decades of the 2<sup>nd</sup> century AD and mid 3rd century AD, the entire group being synchronised to the existence period of the province of Dacia (SPĂNU 2019, 77-78, 93-96). The grave goods evidence the presence of artefacts from the Germanic or Sarmatian environment, like for instance the mirrors with decoration on the reverse. To these add a series of eastern influences, arriving from the Sarmatae environment (zoomorphic handles or knobbed of bowls, pottery with high foot copying metal cauldrons with zoomorphic handles).

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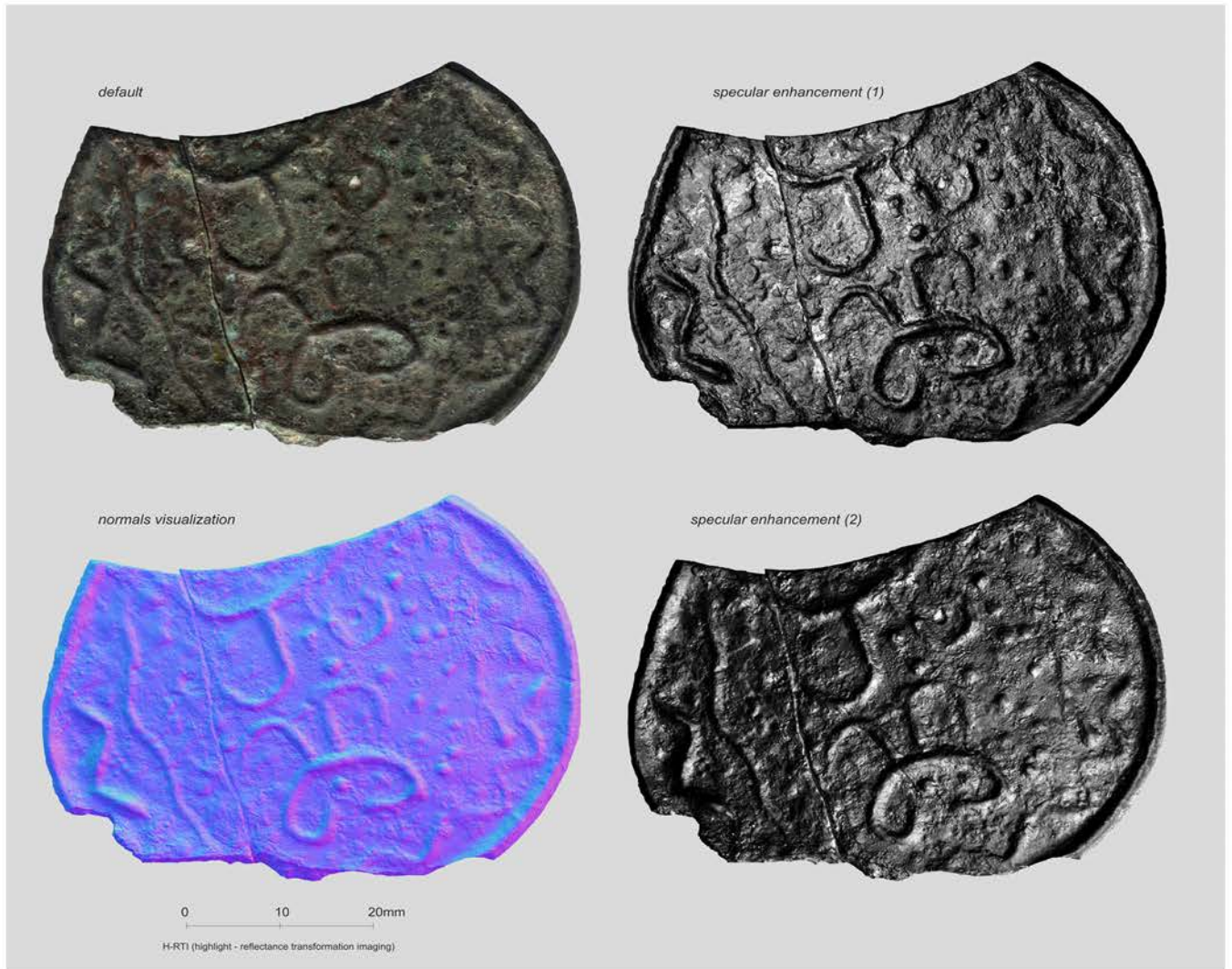


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2

Fig. 1. Mirror with tamgas from the “Podul Pripocului” settlement – Sebeș (photo Călin Șuteu).



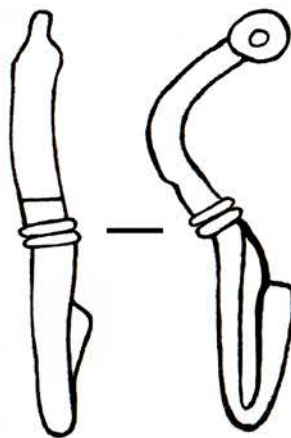
**Fig. 2.** Mirror with tamgas from the “Podul Pripocului” settlement” – Sebeş (scan made by Călin Şuteu).



1

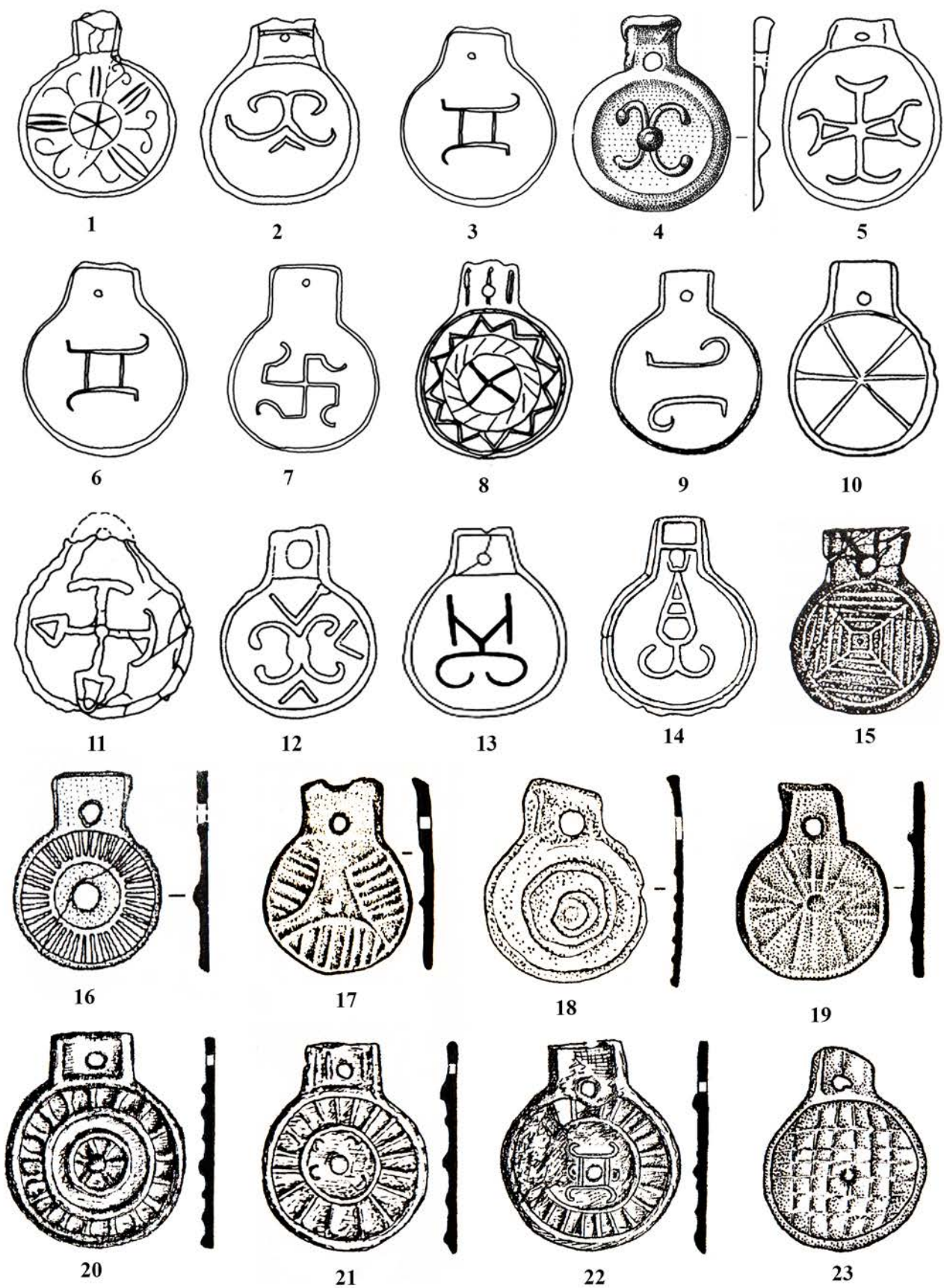


2



3

**Fig. 3.** Mirror with tamgas (1-2) and the bronze brooch (3) from the "Podul Pripocului" settlement – Sebeş (1- after ALDEA 1971; 2 - after HOREDT 1982; 3 - after HOREDT *et alii* 1967).



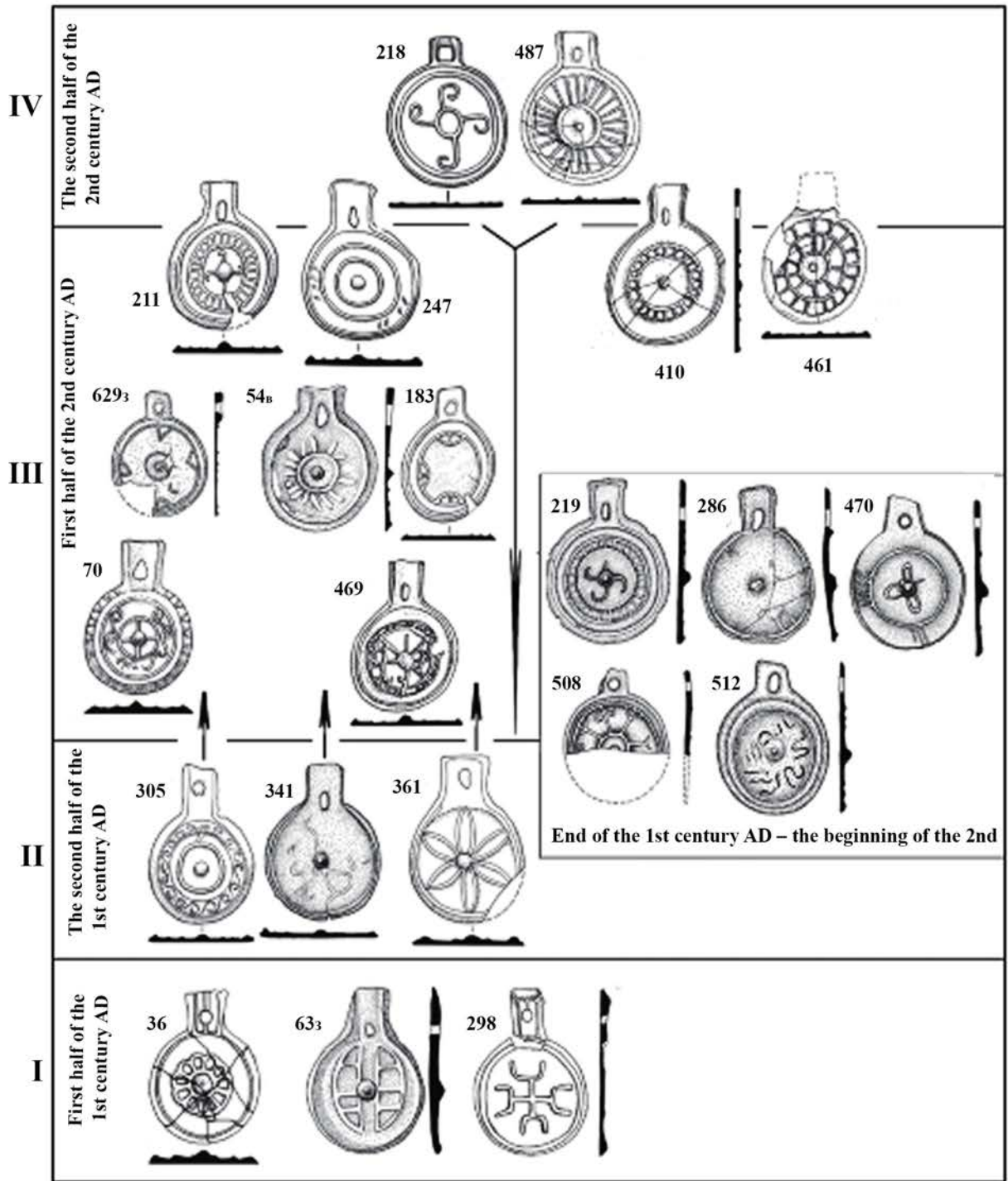
**Fig. 4.** Disc mirrors with decoration in relief and pierced side handle from the Sarmatian environment of Ukraine (1-11) and the Republic of Moldova (12-23). **1.** Akkermen' II T 17 G 1; **2.** Vasil'evka T 27 G 1; **3.** Krinichnoe G 6; **4.** Mayaki T 3 G 6; **5.** Ogorodnoe -2 G 4; **6.** Vladychen' T 5 G 1; **7.** Kurchi T 13 G 1; **8.** Vasil'evka T 23 G 1; **9.** Diviziya T 2 G 1; **10.** Kholmское T 8; **11.** Balki T 12 G 1; **12.** Mărcăuți; **1-3, 5-12** - after BĂRCĂ/SYMONENKO 2009; **4** - after SIMONENKO 2008; **13.** Palanca, destroyed grave (after KURCHATOV 2014); **14.** Pașcani (after GROSU 1983); **15.** Bădragii Noi - La Stâncă G 7 (after KURCIATOV/BUBULICI 1997); **16.** Podojma T 3 G 5 (after BUBULICH/KHAKHEU 2002); **17.** Bălăbănești T 3 (BORZIAC/MANZURA/LEVITSKIJ 1983); **18.** Brânzeni G 4 (after GROSU 1985); **19.** Camenca (after MANZURA/KLOCHKO/SAVVA 1992); **20.** Cuconeștii Vechi-I T 21 G 2; **21.** Cuconeștii Vechi-II T 38 G 1; **22.** Cuconeștii Vechi-II T 40 G 2 (after DERGACHEV 1982); **23.** Comrat (after RIKMAN 1966). Without scale.



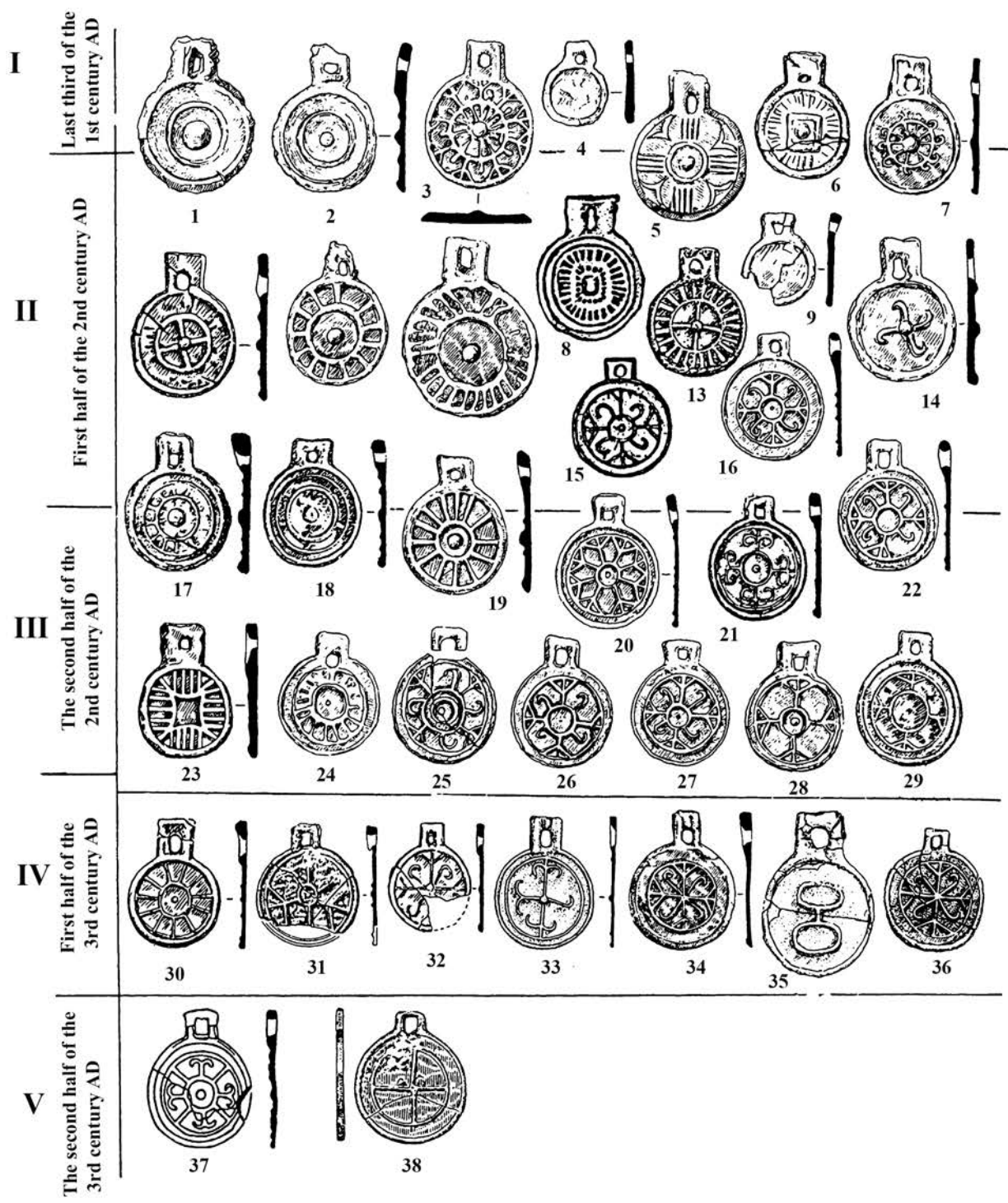
Fig. 5. Disc mirrors with decoration in relief and pierced side handle from the Sarmatian (1-16) and Carpien (17-24) environment of Romania. 1. Uncești G 2; 2. Bârlad-Fabrica de confecții; 3. Ciocani (after PALADE 1979); 4. Cioinagi G 4 (photo Alexandru Bădescu); 5. Brăila-Radu Negru (after OȚA/SÎRBU 2009); 6. Tîrșor G 198; 7. Tîrșor G 200 (after DIACONU 8; 1965. Bordușelu G 1; 9. Pietroiu G 1 (after MUȘTEANU/LUNGU 1978); 10. Bucu G 6; 11. Bucu G 8 (after RENȚA 2000); 12. Ulmeni G 3 (after MORINTZ/IONESCU 1970); 13. Călărași G 7 (after SÎRBU et alii 2014); 14. Dridu-sat G 1; 15. Dridu-tell G 2 (after SÎRBU et alii 2014); 16. Călărași G 1; 17. Însurăței-canalul de irigație (after OȚA/SÎRBU 2009); 18. Pădureni M 9; 19. Butnărești M 7<sup>2</sup>; 20. Pădureni M 14; 21. Pădureni M 60; 22-23. Vârteșcoiu; 24. Pădureni M 34; 25. Pădureni M 77 (after BICHIR 1973). Without scale.



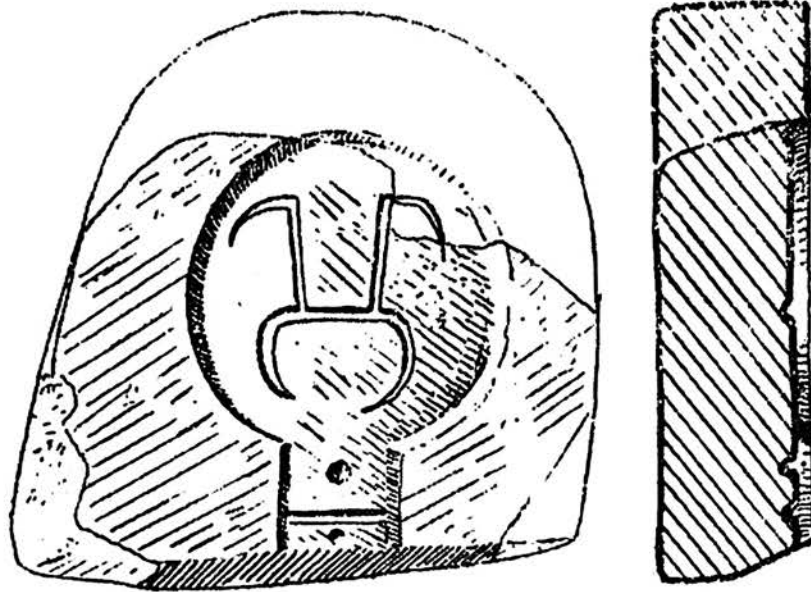
**Fig. 6.** Disc mirrors with decoration in relief and pierced side handle from the Republic of Moldova and Romania. **1.** Mălcăuți (after VORNIC/MATVEEV 2016); **2.** Palanca (photo Ion Tentiuc, Valeriu Bubulici); **3.** Poienești G 1002 (after SPĂNU 2019); **4.** Vorniceni-Pod Ibăneasa G 1 (exhibition catalogue “Sarmații în Nordul Moldovei” (“The Sarmatians from Northern Moldavia” 2018)); **5.** Mitoc-Malu Galben G 1 (photo Lavinia Grumeza); **6.** Vârteșcoiu (<http://clasate.cimec.ro/detalii.asp?tit=Oglinda%E2%80%93Oglinda&k=AF24914D6C1D4D3CAF7EDB-94DEB138EE>). Without scale.



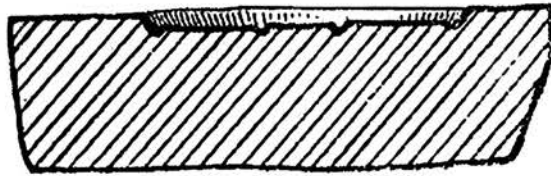
**Fig. 7.** Chronology of the disc mirrors with decoration in relief and pierced side handle from the Meotian environment. **I** - First half of the 1st century AD; **II** - The second half of the 1st century AD; **III** - First half of the 2nd century AD; **IV** - The second half of the 2nd century AD (after LIMBERIS/MARCHENKO 2018).



**Fig. 8.** Chronology of the disc mirrors with decoration in relief and pierced side handle from the cemeteries on the territory of Crimea. **I** – Last third of the 1st century AD; **II** – First half of the 2nd century AD; **III** – The second half of the 2nd century AD; **IV** – First half of the 3rd century AD; **V** – The second half of the 3rd century AD (after TRUFANOV 2007).

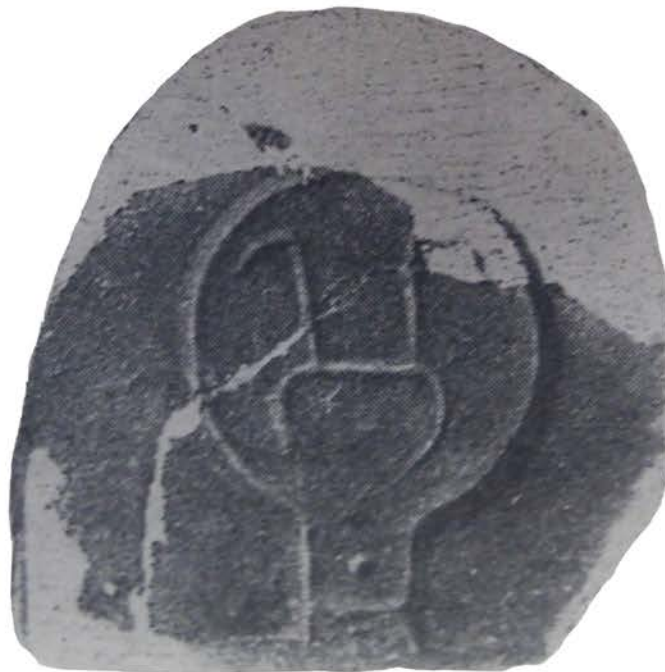


1



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0 3 cm



2

Fig. 9. 1-2. Mould for mirror casting from București-Militari (after BICHIR 1984).

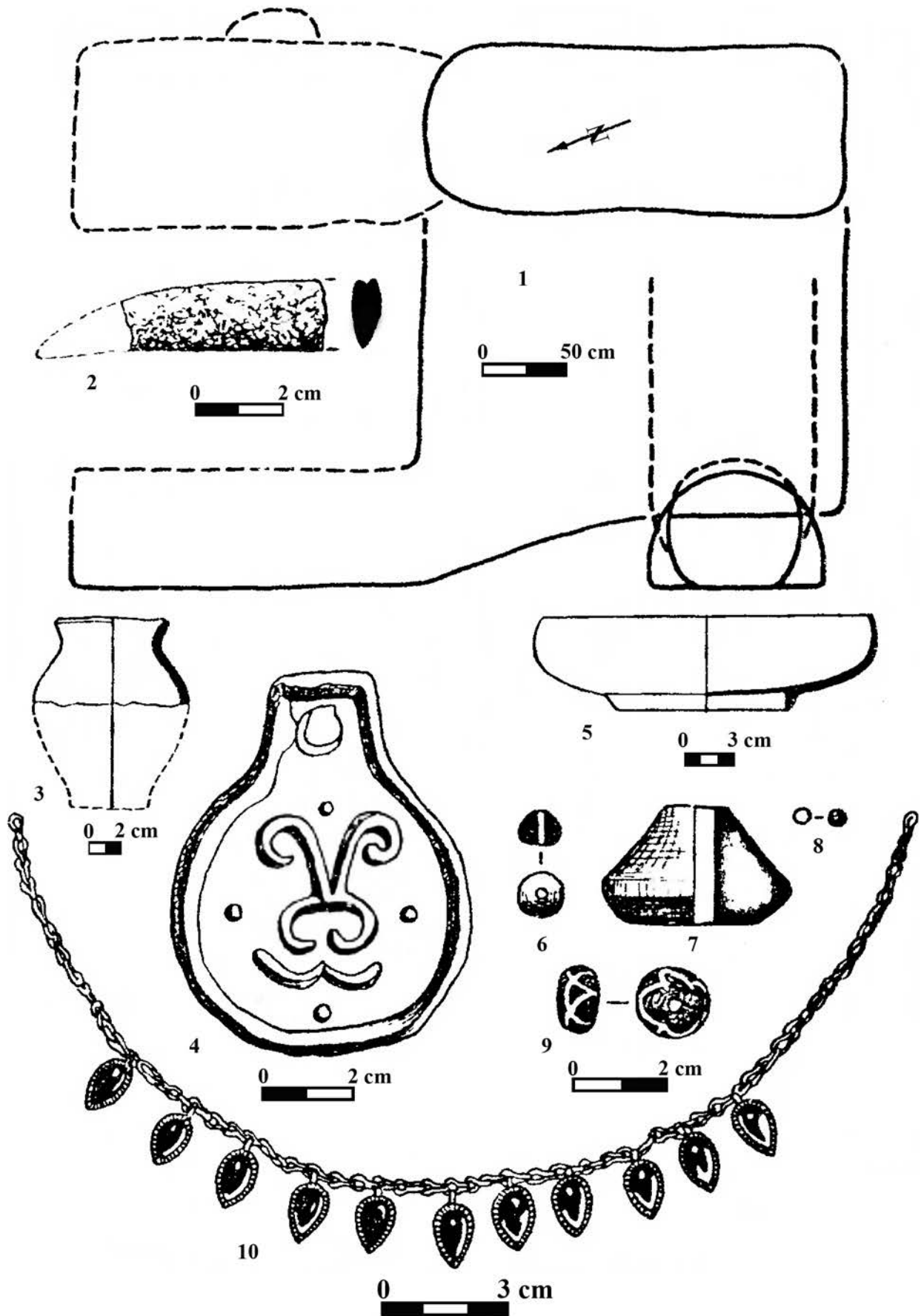
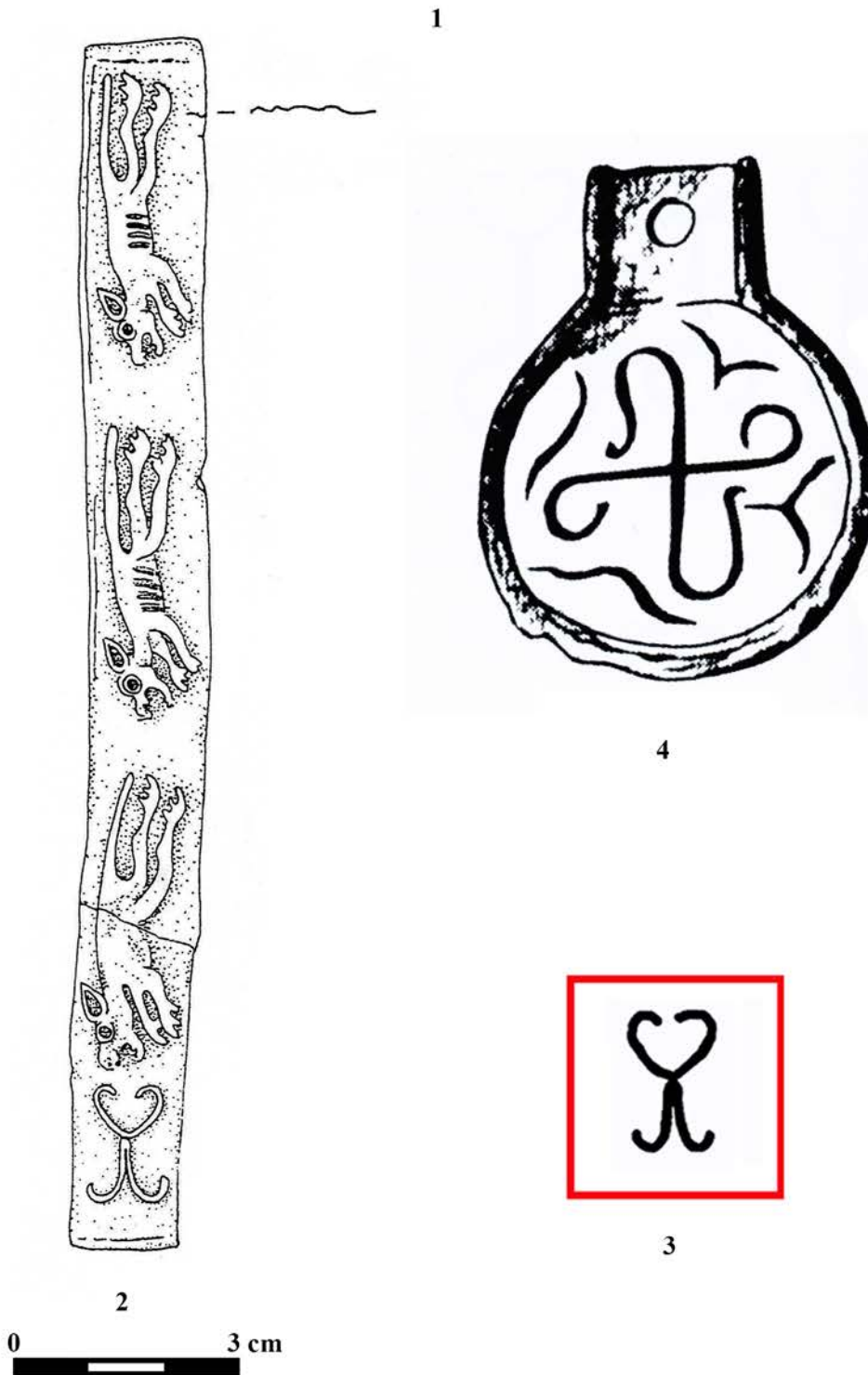
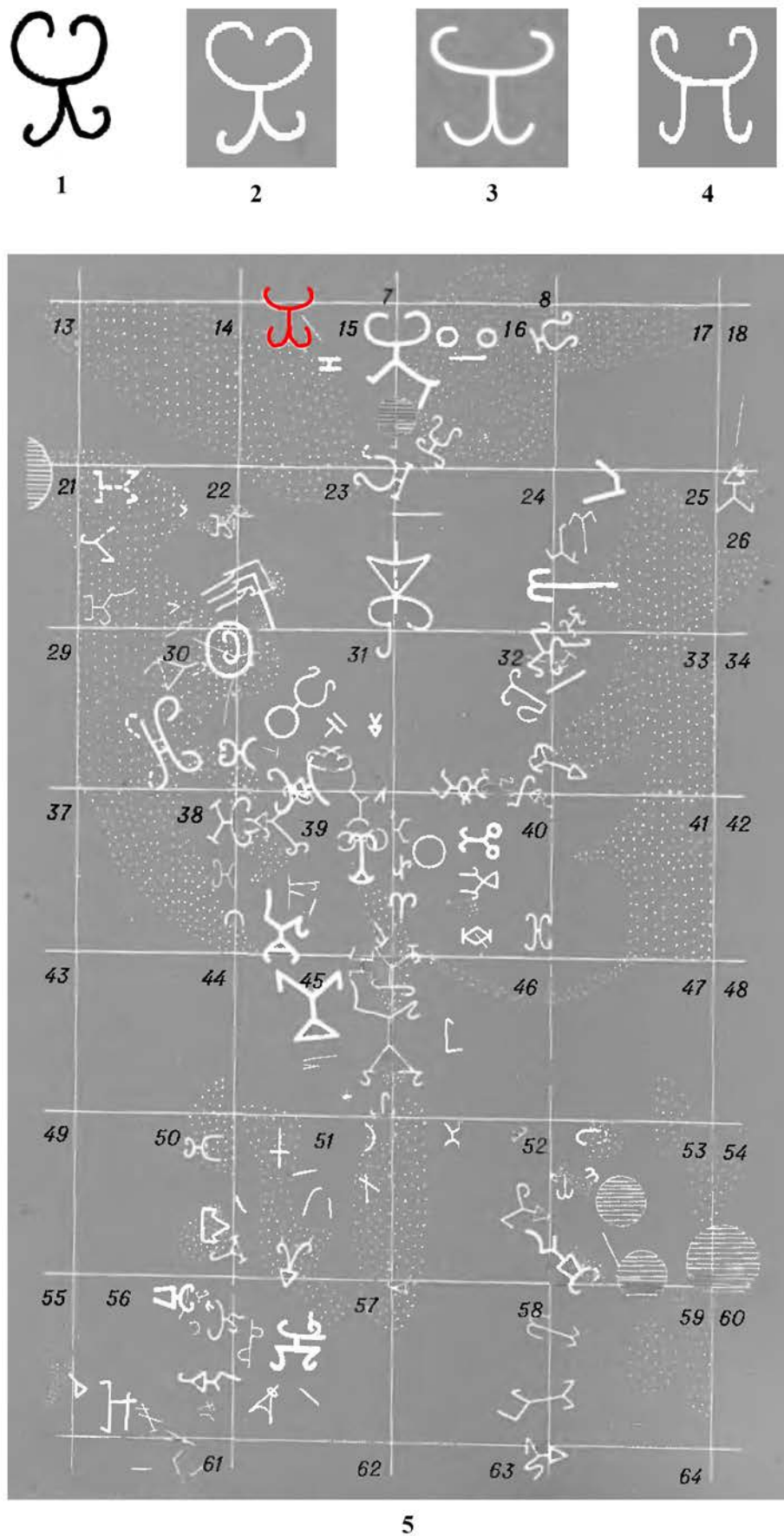


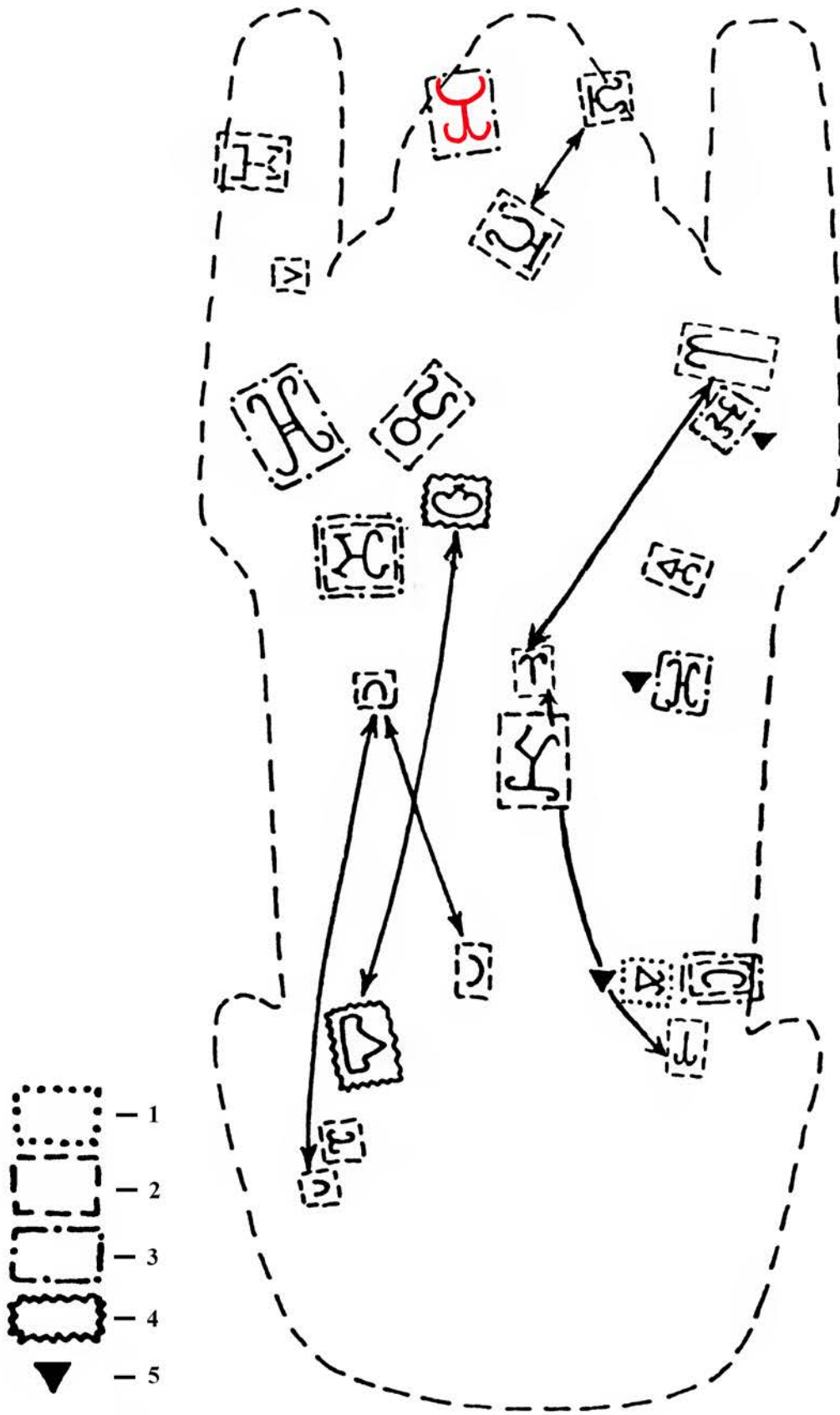
Fig. 10. Mirror with tamga and the funerary goods in T 3 G 1 at Kubej (Odessa region, Ukraine) (after SUBBOTIN/DZIGOVSKIJ 1990).



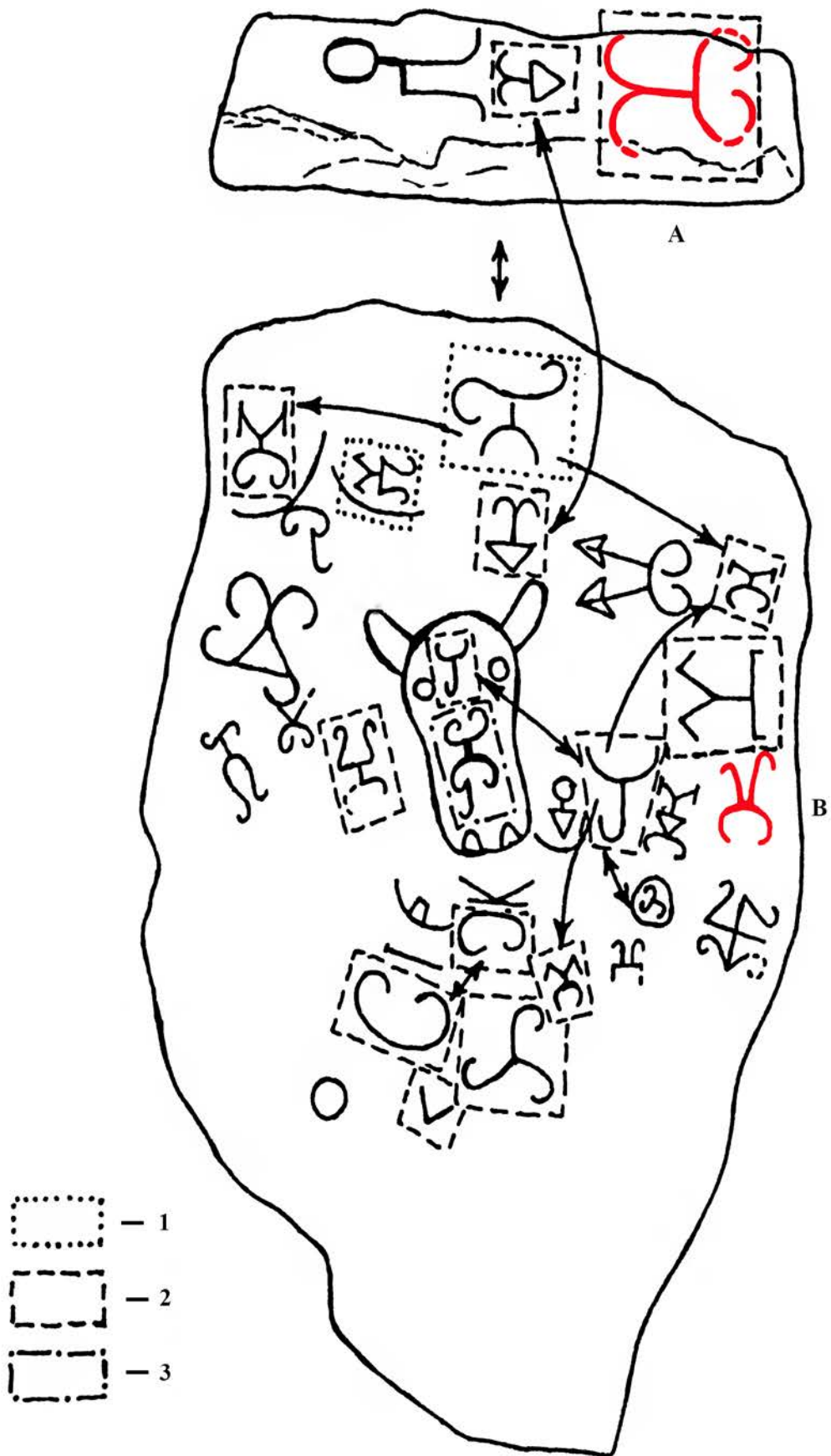
**Fig. 11.** 1-2. Golden plate with tamga from the Sarmatian grave at Dunaharaszti; 3. Tamga on the Dunaharaszti plate (after ISTVÁNOVITS/KULCSÁR 2017); 4. Mirror with tamga from Dunaújváros/Dunapentele (1, 3-4 - after ISTVÁNOVITS/KULCSÁR 2017; 2 - after VADAY 1989).



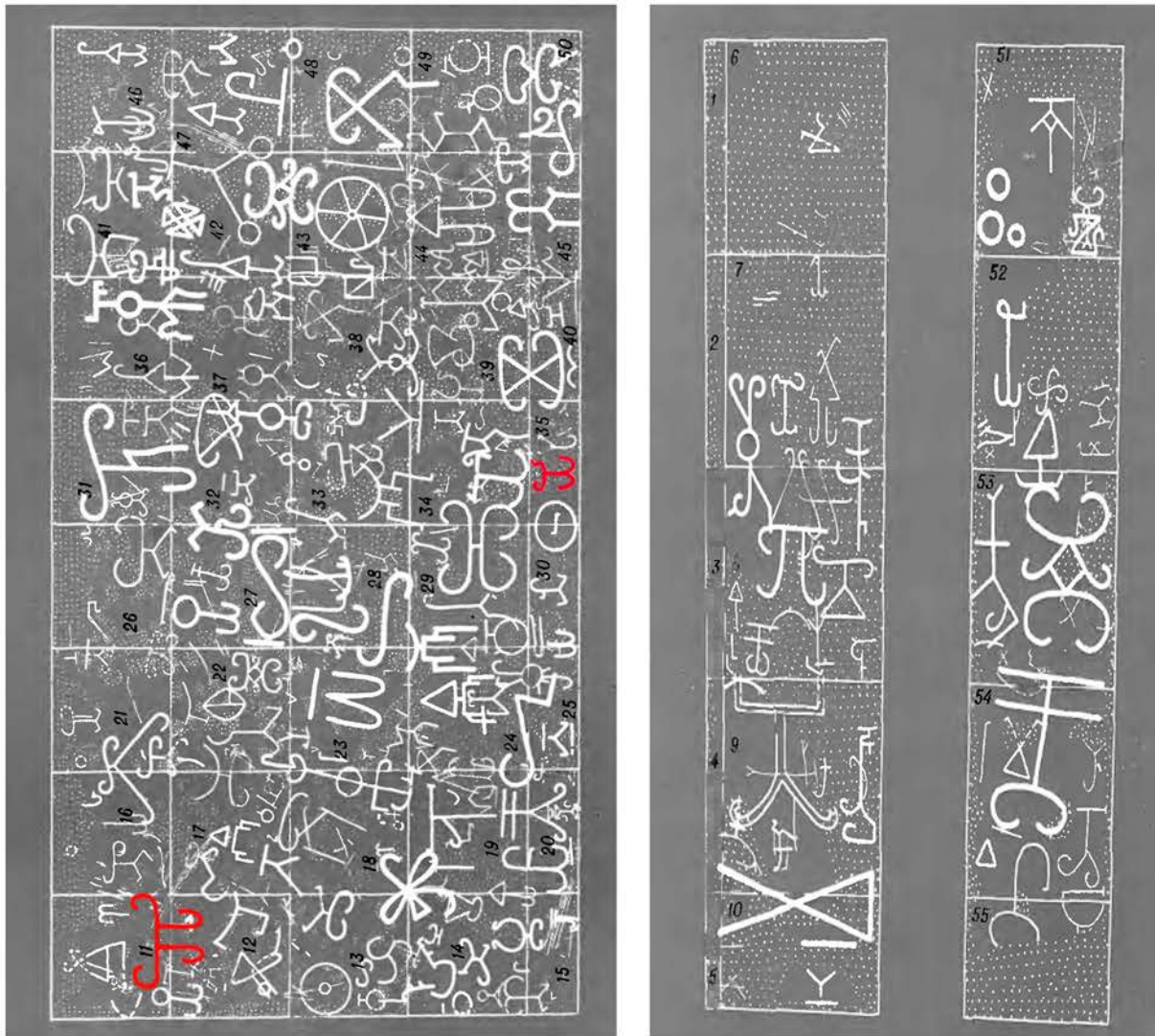
**Fig. 12.** 1-2. Tamga on a tombstone (1 – after MOROŞAN 1938; 2 – after DRACHUK 1975; 3-4. Tamgas from the mountain people environment of western Caucasus; 5. Tamga depictions on the marble lion no.2 at Olbia (after DRACHUK1975). Without scale.



**Fig. 13.** Tamgas specific to certain regions on the marble lion no.2 at Olbia. **1.** Tamgas from the 1st century BC – first half of the 1st century AD; **2.** Tamgas from the second half of the 1st century AD – first half of the 2nd century AD; **3.** Tamgas from the second half of the 2nd century AD – first half of the 3rd century AD; **4.** Tamgas from the second half of the 3rd century AD – first half of the 4th century AD; **5.** King marks (after YATSENKO 2001). Without scale.



**Fig. 14.** Tamgas specific to certain regions on the stone *stela* from Krivoj Rog. **1.** Tamgas from the 1st century BC – first half of the 1st century AD; **2.** Tamgas from the second half of the 1st century AD – first half of the 2nd century AD; **3.** Tamgas from the second half of the 2nd century AD – first half of the 3rd century AD (after YATSENKO 2001). Without scale.



**Fig. 15.** 1-2. The limestone plaque with tamgas from Panticapaeum; 3-5. Tamgas on the Panticapaeum plaque; 6. The golden bracelet with tamga from Olbia (3, 6 - after SOLOMONIK 1959; 1-2, 4-5 - after DRACHUK1975). Without scale.